AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 1, 2002

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2001–02 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 120

Introduced by Assembly Member Runner

September 14, 2001

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 120—Relative to the Aerospace Industry Monument.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 120, as amended, Runner. The Aerospace Valley Monument.

This measure would request the Department of Transportation to grant, without charge, an encroachment permit authorizing a specified historical monument and plaque dedicated to commemorate the major milestones in the aerospace industry that have taken place in the Antelope Valley, to be erected on the vista point overlooking Palmdale Lake on State Highway Route 14. This measure also would request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate plaques and markers and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost, to erect those plaques and markers or to permit an appropriate private source to erect the monument.

Fiscal committee: yes.

WHEREAS, The aerospace industry is a major economic and social force in America, employing approximately 900,000 people; and

WHEREAS, California has been a leader in the aerospace industry; and

WHEREAS, Edwards Air Force Base, the home of the Air Force Flight Test Center (AFFTC), has served the aerospace world for more than 50 years, from America's first jet airplane to the landings of the space shuttle; and

WHEREAS, Numerous milestones in flight have taken place at the AFFTC in its 50-year history, including the following: Air Force Captain Charles E. ''Chuck'' Yeager piloting the rocket-powered Bell X-1 became the first man to penetrate the so-called ''sound barrier'' in 1947, and in 1949, he completed the first, and to this day, only ground takeoff of an experimental rocket plane in the Bell X-1; and

WHEREAS, More than 150 confirmed ''first flights'' have taken off from Edwards Air Force Base, and this list represents a conservative compilation of confirmed first flights of new experimental and prototype air vehicles; and

WHEREAS, In 1953, Jacqueline Cochran, flying a Canadian-built (Canadair) F-86 Sabre, became the first woman to exceed the speed of sound and established a new women's absolute speed record of 652.337 mph over a low-level course at Edwards Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, In 1953, the prototype North American YF-100A Super Sabre became the first aircraft in history to fly supersonic in level flight on its maiden flight from Edwards Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, In 1954, test pilot Major Arthur ''Kit'' Murray piloted the Bell X-1A to a new altitude record of 90,440 feet and became the first man to actually see the curvature of the earth; and

WHEREAS, In 1958, test pilot Captain Walter Irwin set a new official world absolute speed record when he piloted a Lockheed F-104A Starfighter to an average speed of 1,404.09 mph; and

WHEREAS, In 1959, with test pilot Major Joe Jordan at the controls, a Lockheed F-104C became the first jet-powered (air-breathing) aircraft to climb above 100,000 feet; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, Major Bob White became the first man to fly an airplane above 300,000 feet to 314,750 feet and the first to fly an airplane in near space (above 50 miles), and was the first of eight X-15 test pilots at Edwards Air Force Base to earn their astronaut's wings by flying an airplane above 50 miles; and

WHEREAS, In 1967, *Air Force* test pilot Major William J. ''Pete'' Knight piloted the modified X-15A-2 to a speed of Mach

6.7 (4,520 mph) and thereby recorded the fastest speed anyone has ever flown in an airplane; and

WHEREAS, In 1976, Air Force Captain Eldon Joersz set a new official world absolute speed record when he piloted a Lockheed SR-71A to an average speed of 2,193.64 mph at Edwards Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, the nonorbiting Space Shuttle Enterprise demonstrated the soundness of the shuttle design and confirmed the approach and landing techniques after being launched from a 747 and landing on Rogers Dry Lake 5 minutes and 21 seconds later; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, at a remote location, test pilot Lieutenant Colonel N.K. ''Ken'' Dyson completed the final flight of Lockheed's classified Have Blue low-observables concept demonstrator flight test program, and convincingly demonstrated low observability against a wide array of the most sophisticated air- and ground-based air defense systems, and the successful conduct of these tests led to the development of the F-117A Nighthawk in the early 1980s and the stealth revolution began in earnest; and

WHEREAS, In 1981, the Space Shuttle Columbia landed safely on Rogers Dry Lake following its first orbital mission, and marked the first time in history an orbital vehicle had left earth under rocket power and returned on the wings of an aircraft; and

WHEREAS, In 1986, Dick Rutan and Jeanna Yeager piloted the experimental Voyager, and nine days, three minutes and 44 seconds after taking off from Edwards Air Force Base, the aircraft touched down on Rogers Dry Lake after completing the first-ever nonstop, unrefueled flight around the world; and

WHEREAS, NASA Dryden Air Force Rocket Propulsion Laboratory (AFRPL) at Edwards Air Force Base has contributed to the defense of our country since 1954 through the development of virtually all the nation's rocket propulsion technology; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, the AFRPL initiated the development and testing of several rocket engines at the Edwards Rocket Site, including the first ATLAS Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) in 1956; the first full-scale Minuteman solid propellant ICBM in 1959; the Pratt & Whitney XLR-129 Rocket Engine, which served as the precursor to the Rocketdyne "Space Shuttle Main Engine" in 1964; and the Titan 34 Solid Rocket

Booster from the nozzle down to return Titan 34 to the nation's launch service after the Challenger tragedy; and

WHEREAS, The Edwards Rocket Site played a role in President John F. Kennedy's "Race to the Moon" when in 1961 Rocketdyne performed the first test firing of the 1,500,000 pound thrust F-1 Engine for the Manned Lunar Launch Program, and was subsequently used as the location for over 7,000 development and acceptance test firings of the F-1 Engine, that included every engine used to launch men to the moon; and

WHEREAS, AFRPL at the Edwards Rocket Site has continued to play a role in developing space technology since man first walked on the moon, helping to develop the nation's largest hydrogen rocket engine for the Boeing Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle and "Attitude Control Thrusters Systems" for satellite and space maneuvering applications; and

WHEREAS, In 1953 the former Palmdale Airport was officially converted into Air Force Plant 42, and since then, under the direction of the United States government, has supported facilities for the production, engineering, final assembly, and flight testing of many notable high-performance aircraft from Boeing, Lockheed-Martin, and Northrop Grumman, including the F-100 Super Sabre, F-104 Starfighter, SR-71 Blackbird, B-1 Lancer, Space Shuttle, F-117 Nighthawk, B-2 Spirit, and U-2S reconnaissance plane; and

WHEREAS, Air Force Plant 42 has consistently made great contributions to aeronautics and astronautics in America, winning nine prestigious Collier Trophies in recognition for improving the performance, efficiency, and safety of air and space vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Air Force Plant 42 is a major part of the economic vitality of the Antelope Valley, employing approximately 8,500 workers in and around the airfield complex, and bringing a half billion dollars in wages to the local community and millions more in local contracts; and

WHEREAS, Several of the world's leading aerospace and defense firms as well as local subcontractors and suppliers have recognized the importance of aerospace in the region, and have joined together to form a cooperative organization called the Antelope Valley Aerospace Alliance, which is dedicated to the economic survival and improvement of the aerospace economy

located in the vicinity of Edwards Air Force Base and United States Air Force Plant 42; and

WHEREAS, The Antelope Valley Aerospace Alliance is a unique-in-the-nation organization that has grown to represent over 20,000 military and civilian members involved with the design, development, production, flight test, and support of advanced military and civilian air and spacecraft; and

WHEREAS, It would be a fitting tribute to erect a monument and plaque to commemorate the major milestones within the aerospace industry that have taken place in the Antelope Valley; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Transportation is requested to grant, without charge, the necessary encroachment permit authorizing a historical monument and plaque dedicated to commemorate the major milestones within the aerospace industry that have taken place in the Antelope Valley, to be placed within the right-of-way of the vista point overlooking Palmdale Lake on State Highway Route 14, which plaque will read substantially as follows:

Within the Antelope Valley, significant aerospace accomplishments have occurred throughout the century. This monument is dedicated to all the craftsmen, engineers, technicians, and pilots who have made these strides in aerospace possible, including:

Air Force Captain Charles E. ''Chuck'' Yeager's breaking of the ''sound barrier'' in the rocket-powered Bell X-1 in 1947.

~~Test~~ *Air Force test* pilot Major William J. ''Pete'' Knight's record as the ''Fastest Man Alive'' flying at a speed of Mach 6.7 (4,520 mph) in the modified X-15A-2 in 1967.

The historic landing of the Space Shuttle Columbia in 1981, which landed safely on Rogers Dry Lake following its first orbital mission.

More than 150 ''first flights,'' which greatly expanded the possibilities of flights on earth and in space.

Aircraft manufacturing milestones include:

(a) The B-2 and B-1B bombers.

(b) The F-117 Stealth Fighter.
(c) The SR-71 ''Blackbird'' spy plane.
(d) The Space Shuttle orbiters.

The work of the men and women who contributed to these accomplishments cannot be overstated. Their contributions have made the Antelope Valley a leading aerospace force not only in California, but also in the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested to determine the cost of appropriate plaques and markers, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, and upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover that cost, to erect those plaques and markers or to permit an appropriate private source to erect a monument; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the Department of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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